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RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUCOGCA/COMNAVBASE GUANTANAMO BAY CU
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 000473

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CCA
DEPT FOR EEB/ESC/TFS
DEPT ALSO FOR DRL/AWH, AND S/P JARED COHEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2019
TAGS: [EINT](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [PHUM](#) [CU](#)
SUBJECT: REVERSING THE CUT-OFF OF U.S. INTERNET MESSAGING
SERVICES IN CUBA

REF: HAVANA 361

Classified By: COM JONATHAN FARRAR FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) Reftel requested Washington action to reverse the moves by Microsoft, Google, and others to block their Internet messaging services in Cuba. The actions by these U.S. companies to stop such services only help the efforts of GOC censors to control the information available to the Cuban people and run directly counter to our own efforts to expand the free flow of information to, from, and within Cuba. Our understanding is that the U.S. firms acted out of concern that providing such services might run counter to USG controls on exports to countries deemed to be state sponsors of terrorism.

¶2. (C) In the past seven weeks, from our perspective there has been little discernable progress on resolving this issue. We still face the looming threat that this ban may spread to other social networking services. Meanwhile, the USG is devoting considerable time, effort, and resources on a broad spectrum of programs designed to increase the free flow of information in Cuba. On April 13, the President announced new steps to facilitate increased telecommunications links between the United States and Cuba. The juxtaposition of these initiatives and the continued blocking of social networking services damages our credibility and, more importantly, the ability of the Cuban people to communicate directly with one another.

¶3. (C) Action Request: Havana requests renewed efforts by Washington agencies to resolve this imbroglio with leading U.S. technology companies and restore messaging and other similar services in Cuba as quickly as possible.

FARRAR